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The Secret Dominican Testimony

CIA Chief's Appearance
Before Senate Committee
Is Called Inept

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OFFICIAL SECRECY continues to hide the whole story of the United States intervention in the Dominican Republic.

Leaks from the closed hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last summer have brought out enough of the facts to throw doubt on the main points of the Johnson Administration's official story.

But officials are suggesting that some of the reported disclosures are inaccurate. The transcript remains secret and only a part of it apparently has been seen by the reporters who made those disclosures.

ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS tried to find the source of the leak and plug it. For a time, some of them suspected that someone in the executive branch might have given the New York Times and Los Angeles Times access to part of the transcript.

Then attention turned to Capitol Hill, and a staff member of the Foreign Relations Committee suddenly appeared at the office of Senator Eugene J. McCarthy (Dem.), Minnesota, to demand the return of three volumes of testimony by Thomas C. Mann, Under Secretary of State and the man President Lyndon B. Johnson once said would be the government's "one voice" in Latin American affairs.

McCarthy had borrowed the testimony to use in preparation for speeches questioning the wisdom of the intervention and suggesting policies for the future.

The staff man stood beside the safe in McCarthy's office until one of the Senator's aids obtained the combination, took out the transcripts and handed them over.

Officials who want to keep the testimony secret point out that the witnesses all were assured that they could speak freely because a transcript never would be made public.

There have been suggestions that a "sanitized" version could be published with sensitive portions deleted. But officials recognize that blank spaces in the

transcript would feed suspicions that essential parts of the story were being withheld.

AN OBVIOUS special reason for suppressing the testimony is that it clashes with main points in the official account, as told more recently in a State Department pamphlet titled "The Dominican Crisis . . . The Hemisphere Acts," and with statements made during the crisis by Secretary of State Dean Rusk and the President himself.

Some officials suggest, an additional reason for continued secrecy. There is wide acknowledgement that one of the witnesses, Vice Admiral William F. Raborn, Director of Central Intelligence, was a poor witness, although a key figure in the Dominican intervention.

Several persons who worked with Raborn in the crisis confirm that he mispronounces the names of foreign countries and personalities consistently, has a poor mind for facts, and acts as if he had never heard of something discussed five minutes before.

Officials did not deny these points in a recent description of Raborn by columnist Joseph Kraft. But a CIA man said that he regretted their publication, "because it means he'll stay on for at least another year."

Another official, asked about the transcript, said, "they'll never publish Raborn's testimony." He made it clear that he thought the reason would be Raborn's ineptitude of expression rather than national security.

STATE DEPARTMENT sources said that Mann denies making a quoted remark that Bosch, in common with "many Latin American politicians would make an alliance with the devil if he thought it would get him into office."

Mann is said to have had aids combing the transcript in an unsuccessful effort to find any such statement in his testimony.

There has been some expectation that Mann would ask for complete publication of the transcript to clear up what he considers to be distortions in the leaks.

Senator Clifford P. Case, (Rep.), New Jersey, has proposed to the chairman, Senator J. William Fulbright, (Dem.), Arkansas, that the entire record be made public.

Senator McCarthy, a new member of the committee, has commended Administration witnesses as having co-operated fully in the hearings. Insofar as he knew, he said, every telegram and every other document requested by the committee was made available. On the question of publication, he said:

"It is always dangerous to publish a portion of a record, especially if what is published is in part declassified material. If a portion of the record is published, then it may be necessary to publish the entire record with the exception of those portions of it which may have bearing on national security. The testimony, of course, was received in confidence by the committee."

and there are suggestions that a "sanitized" version could be published with sensitive portions deleted. But officials recognize that blank spaces in the

record might help in judging the competence and performance of Ambassador W. Tapley Bennett Jr. during the crisis. The Senator added that he was not yet prepared either to praise or blame Ben-

nett, since it was not clear what part he had in policy making or "to what extent he or his office was the principal source of information during the crisis."

Other sources have suggested that a shortcoming in Fulbright's speech last September, in which he criticized the Dominican intervention, was that he placed heavy blame on the embassy in Santo Domingo but omitted mention of the Central Intelligence Agency.

There has been increasing criticism of the CIA's performance among those familiar with the decision to intervene. These sources say that the CIA supplied masses of unverified information greatly exaggerating the role of Dominican Communists in the revolution.

In efforts to bolster the Administration's case, the CIA has been bringing up to date its list of Communists and alleged Communists reportedly connected with the uprising. The agency is said to have prepared a 60-page "White Paper" as a definitive statement of the case that a Communist takeover was imminent.

But some officials believe that the White Paper would not stand scrutiny much better than earlier lists that have been produced. Some think that any White Paper mainly serves to provide a new target for criticism. And there is a strong belief that its publication would cause the committee's transcript to be published in retaliation.